1:Gabb N-5 (1873-1874) 1876
SA19 Talamanca SA19

of hygiene, and the universal negligence of the sick, on the part of the well, all contribute to shorten the average lifeterm of the people, so that very few old men or women are to be found, and the mortality is so great among the young that the deaths more than counterbalance the births. Unless some great change takes place, the whole of the tribes of Talamanca will have disappeared within two or three generations more. The Tiribis, who like the others have strict rules about marriage, within certain degrees of consanguinity, are now so reduced that several young men and women are to-day forced to remain unmarried for want of proper mates sufficiently removed in relationship. But at the beginning of this century they were powerful enough to give battle to the Bri-bris. The Changinas and Shelabas have disappeared and the fate of the other tribes requires no prophet to foretell.

Physically, the people of all the tribes bear a strong resemblance to each other. They are of short stature, broad shouldered, heavily built, full in the chest, with well-formed limbs, and well muscled throughout. Their color is similar to that of the North American Indians, or, if anything different, perhaps a little lighter. There seems to be but little, if any admixture of foreign blood among them. Their history would hardly lead us to expect it. They have lived very exclusively, and it has hardly been half a century since they have ceased to live in a state of open war with all intruders from the coast side. The Spanish occupation closed so disastrously over a century and a half ago, was of too short duration, and and the whites were too few, to make a permanent impression on a then populous country.

The following measurements taken from my servant, a full grown man, who is not more than an inch, if so much, under the average height, will give a fair idea of their build. He measures in height, 5 ft. 1½ in., circumference of chest, under the arms 35½ inches; of hips 34 inches, of waist 33½ inches, length from axilla to tips of the fingers, 24½ inches; leg, from the groin to the ground, 29 inches. Both sexes are marked by an almost perfect absence of hair from all parts of the person except the head; where there is a dense growth of coarse, straight black hair. This the women plait with considerable taste. The men wear theirs cut moderately long and of an even length all round; or a few retaining an older fashion, have it a little over a foot long, apparently its entire natural length, and either let it stream loosely over the shoulders, gather it into two plaits, or twist it into a roll, bound with a strip of manatee, and coiled at the back of the head in a round flat mass.

The breasts of the women are not conical, as occurs with many, if not most of the Indian races; but are fully as globular as those of the European or African. Nor are they directed laterally. They are not generally large, though some marked exceptions occur to this rule. But they have one strongly marked peculiarity. The entire areolar area is developed into a globular protuberance, completely enveloping and hiding the nipple. The development of this part begins with, almost

1:Gabb N-5 (1873-1874) 1876
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291 mastate was worn; simply a strip with a hole in the middle for the head, and tied under each arm with a piece of string. Now many of the men [177] have discarded the breech-cloth, and wear cotton shirts and pantaloons, buying the stuff from the traders and sewing them themselves. Others, not so far advanced, wear a shirt and a breech-cloth. Formerly the hair 302 was worn as long as it would grow, sometimes rolled up and tied behind in a knot. Some of the conservatives still stick to the old style and follow this custom yet; others of the men wear their hair in two plaits, but the majority cut it to a moderate length, and either confine it by a bright-colored handkerchief tied round the head in a roll, or wear a hat.

291 The dress of the women originally consisted of a simple petticoat (*bana*) of mastate. Very few now use this material, preferring the softer cotton cloth of the traders. The favorite color is a dark indigo-blue, with figures five or six inches across, in white. The *bana* is a simple strip of cloth wrapped round the hips, with the ends overlapping about six inches in front. It is suspended at the waist by a belt, and reaches more or less to the knees. When on a journey in rainy or muddy weather, I have seen a simple substitute. It was made of a couple of plantain leaves, stripped to a coarse fringe and wound round the waist by the midribs. With nothing above nor below it, it is the nearest approach to a fig leaf one can imagine. Only of late have the women begun to wear anything above the waist, and even now it is considered hardly necessary. Some of the women wear a sort of loose little jacket, or chemise, very low in the neck and short in the sleeves, that barely reaches the waist and only partially conceals the bosom. I have frequently seen a woman, in the habit of wearing one of these, either take it off entirely, or fan herself with it, if warm, in the presence of a number of men, and evidently innocent of improper intentions, and unaware that she was doing anything remarkable. With this scanty dress, I must do these 291 people the justice of saying that they are remarkably modest, both 834 men and women. In a year and a half of life in their country, traveling constantly with a body of them, bathing, fording rivers, living in their houses, and seeing more than strangers generally do of the intimate domestic life of the people they are among, I can only recall a single instance of carelessness, and not one of a wanton exposure of those parts of the person, that their ideas of modesty required to be kept covered.

291 The dress just described is that of the Bri-bris and Cabecars. The Tiribi men, where they do not wear pantaloons, always use the native cotton breech-cloth, never the mastate. The women wear a long strip of cotton cloth, made with a hole in the middle, like a poncho, and reaching before and behind, nearly to the ground. It is gathered up at the waist by a belt, and the edges are caused to overlap at the same time, so that the whole person is securely covered. I was also told that under this they wear a species of breech-cloth or drawers. They are much more retiring in their manner than their Bri-bri sisters; never speak

1:Gabb N-5 (1873-1874) 1876
SA19 Talamanca SA19

to a stranger except when spoken to, and then reply in as few words as possible and with apparent bashfulness. 291

For ornaments, all wear necklaces. The favorite ones are made of teeth, of which those of the tiger are most highly prized. Only the canine teeth are used. Small strings are sometimes made of monkey, coon, or other teeth, but are not much thought of. I have seen one of these made of five strings of tiger teeth, gradually diminishing in size, and covering the entire breast of the wearer. The women rarely, almost never, wear these. If they wear teeth, they are of some very small animal. In place of them, they use great quantities of glass beads. I have seen fully three pounds of beads around the neck of one old woman, and she was the envy of all her friends and neighbors. Even little girls are often so loaded down that the weight must be irksome to them. Money is often worn by the women. On one occasion I paid a man six dollars, all in Costa Rican quarters, for his month's work. After a few days I went to his house and saw the entire sum strung on his wife's neck. Shells are also sometimes, though rarely used. The men sometimes carry, suspended from the necklace, the shell of a small species of *murex*, with the varices ground off and a hole drilled in it to make a whistle. These are bought in Terraba, and are highly prized. 301 [237]

The men sometimes wear head dresses made of feathers. The most highly prized are the white downy feathers from under the tail of the large eagle. Others are made from chicken feathers, or are worked in rows of blue, red, black, yellow, &c., from the plumage of small birds. I have seen one head-dress made of the long hair from the tail of the great ant-eater, in the place of feathers. The feathers are secured vertically to a tape and extend laterally so as to reach from temple to temple, curling over forward at the top, the tape being tied behind, so as to keep the hair in place. 237 301

Painting is somewhat in vogue, to assist in the adornment of the person, but is not confined to either sex. The commonest manner is to color each cheek with a square or parallelogram, about an inch across, either solid or made up of bars. This is done with the dark reddish-brown sap of a certain vine, and the pattern resists wear and tear, and water for a week or more. Anatto is also used, but more rarely, and is applied in bars or stripes to the face, according to the skill or taste of the artist. Besides, a hideous indigo-blue stain from a fruit, is sometimes smeared on the face or body, but even savage taste does not seem to approve of this, since it is very unusual. 302 ● 386

Formerly the Tiribis tattooed small patterns on their faces or arms; but the younger people have not kept up the custom, and the Bri-bris and Cabecars say they never did it. The chiefs on great occasions wear gold ornaments, similar to those now found in the *Huacas*, or graves of Chiriqui. Whether these have been recovered from some of these graves, or whether they have been handed down from time immemorial is not known. There are but four or five in the tribe, and two of these belong 304 301 622

2;Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri

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"The men sometimes wear headdresses made of feathers. The most prized are the white down feathers from under the tail of the large eagle. Others are made of chicken feathers, or are worked in rows of blue, red, black, yellow, &c., from the plumage of small birds. I have seen one headdress made from the hair of the tail of the great ant-eater, in the place of feathers. The feathers are secured vertically to a tape and extend laterally so as to reach from temple to temple, curling over forward at the top, the tape being tied behind, so as to keep the hair in place." 237 301

Gabb observed facial paintings applied by both sexes, but none were seen by the writer. He refers to designs made with the reddish-brown sap of a vine, the commoner designs being squares or parallelograms, about an inch across, on each cheek. These figures were either solid or made up of bars. Another pigment, called annato, was drawn in stripes or bars on the face, or an indigo fruit juice was smeared on the face and body. Tattooing is unknown. 302 [386] [531] [386] [304]

291 quality as a man's belt. Occasionally, as late as a few years ago, this same *huipil* was used with a piece of cloth attached to the back as a collar. The skirt, which is relatively heavy, is worn wrapped around the body, the stripes placed horizontally (see fig. 7, *d*). It is sustained by a string tied around the waist. Under the skirt, loin cloths of *mastate* (see p. 18) are sometimes worn. No other sort of undergarment is used.

301 Today, most women wear two necklaces, usually of beads with seeds or coins interspersed. Earrings of seeds, a round red seed from the *poró* tree, or a similar seed that has a black spot and grows on a vine, are favorites, but cheap earrings from *ladino* stores are also seen. Before, however, in addition to seeds and fruits, sea shells and even pearls were used. Pink sea shells, such as the *Guaymi* wear today, were particularly coveted. Animal pelts and bird's egg shells served as necklaces. Rings were and are made from the seeds of the coyol palm and a palm called *palmilera*. The women love combs and flowers in their [439] hair, seldom appearing with less than two combs and, as a rule, three or four, all of bright colors and bought from the Chinamen on the coast or in Buenos Aires. Barrettes also are frequently placed between the combs and the flowers. The hair is always arranged in two 302 braids and parted in the center. Often ribbon is braided in these plaits. Until recently, instead of ribbons in the braids, cotton thread dyed purple was used. It is said that no other color answered the purpose. The two braids were tied with this thread on top of the hair in the front. Today, the older women gen-

[continued p. 14-B, first paragraph]

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481 By Land. The *Boruca*, as is true of all the Indians of Costa Rica, are great walkers, climbing up and down the sharp spurs and steep mountains of their native habitat. Their main community, as we have seen, is situated in a series of undulating hills, which in itself is not easy country for a horse or a mule. The 492 ox is what one might rightly call the only beast of burden common to these people. A number of families own an ox which is used

[continued p. 14-B, fourth paragraph]

[1] Lehmann, 1920, vol. I, p. 198.

erally put the braids up, tying them together with ribbons. The hair is kept sleek with cocoa-butter, and the skin is cleared of freckles or blemishes by using a mixture of cocoa-butter (see p. 20) and *tʃama*. T*ʃama* is sometimes called by the Spanish name *yuquilla* (*Curcuma longa* L.).

The men wear the regulation pants and shirt of the *ladino* and some still use the woven belt. In the beginning of this century, the men wore a typical costume, the cloth for which was woven by the men. Lehmann[23] notes that this was characteristic of the *Cotos*, whom, as we have seen, form part of the modern *Boruca*. Weaving was done by some, not all, of the men and women. In particular the older *Coto* men wove for all the other men.[24] The men used a *huipil* without sleeves which took one month to weave and reached below the knees. The stripes were narrower than those of a women's skirt, and they were more like the belts used at present by the men. Beneath this, they wore a loin cloth of *mastate*, and a woven belt which kept the loin-cloth in place. Formerly, the men cut off all their hair except a small portion in the front which stood up like unruly bangs. One old man in 1944 used the same sort of decorations which were used years ago, pelts of birds, squirrel tails, and bird egg shells as necklaces.

Most Indians go barefooted, although occasionally sandals are seen. These sandals are of hide, usually of wild peccary, with thongs of twisted hide which pass between the first and second toe and between the third and fourth toe, being fastened on the outer side by the ankle.

TRANSPORTATION

to transport essentials on his back (see fig. 7, *a*), and never to pull a cart as amongst the *ladinos*. The very few horses of the *Boruca* (see p. 23) are ridden with a halter, and old, worn, second-hand saddles.

By Water. In addition to a mountainous land, the terrain of the *Boruca* and most of their communities border on water. The Diquis River still forms an important highway for these people. Until a few years ago, the

[23] Vázquez de Coronado, 1908, p. 50.

Miscellaneous. Candles are made from wax of the *jicote*, a wild bee, and from the wax of the wild wasps. Clothes are washed with *jaboncillo* (*Leguminosae* sp.). This is a vine which grows near the river Diquis. The roots only are used, and are cut into pieces and mashed. When mixed with water, suds are produced, and it is an effective cleansing agent. Brooms are made of fern leaves tied to wooden handles. Cocoa-butter is found in every Boruca household. The women rub it in their hair so their hair will shine. It also has a common use as a salve for certain remedies, such as boils or sores on the legs. To make the butter, the cacao bean is toasted and then boiled. The grease rises to the top, and then is skimmed off and put on a *bijagua* leaf (see p. 9), or in a gourd, to cool and to solidify. The liquid remaining in the pot is drunk. This is called *tivia* in Spanish and *kao* in the Boruca tongue.

MEASUREMENTS OF TIME

moon as well as by the calendar of the *ladinos*. Most of the Indians have no conception of their age. The numeral count of these people runs from one to eight, Spanish being used for the remaining numbers. Foodstuffs are measured by hand-fulls or by gourds. There does not appear to be indigenous methods for weighing.

CYCLE

8). The end of the cord is burned with *tocolote*, the colored cotton. White cotton is not used. The cut part is buried where the child is born. In cases when the cord is slow to fall off the infant, the dust from the *bajareque* of the house wall is mixed with cinnamon and applied to the babe. After birth, the child is bathed in the liquid remaining from boiling three plants. One is a grass which grows in the savanna and is called *trik-kra'*. This is a very fine grass that has a little root resembling *tiquisqui* and yellow blossoms. The other plant grows by streams and is called *tʃu-kra'*. Pittier does not mention *trik-kra'* but cites *tsbu-krá*,[33] and gives the same use for it. Standley,[34] following Pit-

[33] Pittier, 1888, p. 93.
[34] Standley, 1937, p. 761, pt. II.

5:Urcullu M-5 (1763) 1913
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101 131 There are seven tribes of those heathens who are known as *Talamancas;* the first is that of the same name, which embraces two others called *Cabécara* and *Biceyto;* the second is called *Térraba;* the third, *Thórar,* on account of living upon an island of that name on the coast of the North Sea;[11] the fourth is named *Changuen;* the fifth is called *Zegua;* the sixth, *Thorasque,* and the seventh, *Guaymi.* Of these the last three are in the districts of the Kingdom of *Tierra Firme,* and the first four in this district of *Guatemala.*[12]

721 [411] The Indians of all these tribes are generally brave and warlike; for their most common exercise is to go about with bows and spears practicing for their wars, which they are generally engaged in with each other for the purpose of enslaving the men and carrying off the women. The sport and diversion of the boys is [868] [957] to shoot arrows and throw spears at [illegible] thus become very skilfull in the handling of them.

291 [286] All the men of these tribes go entirely naked, only the *Talamancas* covering their private parts with girdles. The women all wear the girdle down to the knee, or use a blanket, which they weave from cotton or with *mastate* (a bark fibre) which they get by cutting trees.

304 [302] The greatest sport of these barbarians is to paint themselves black over the whole of their bodies, which they do with the greatest hardiness, allowing themselves to be scarified by the experts whom they have among them, and over the bleeding places they put *copal,*[13] which makes them swell up, and some even die by being cut in delicate parts, such as the face, neck and elsewhere. When they kill an enemy in war, they make a 304 554 hole with a peg of strong wood and they drill the cartilage of the nose, as well as the lower lip; and when they have opened these two holes they put in each one of them a little bone like a cigar-

[11] The island of *Tójar* or Island of *Colón.*

[12] [114] The enumeration which Padre Urcullu made was not strictly correct, inasmuch as the *Zeguas, Thorasques* or *Dorasques* and *Guaymies* lived wholly or in part, like the *Guaymies,* in the territory of *Costa Rica;* but it will be noted that besides, according to his statement, the Island of *Colón,* and consequently the *Bay of Almirante* belonged to *Costa Rica.* M. M. P.

[13] *Protium copal.*

291 a cheap cotton cloth which is bought from
[439] the nearest trading post or commissary and made into a Mother Hubbard. Short skirts and blouses are occasionally seen, particularly on the Pacific side. Some of the older Bribri women in upper Talamanca weave brown and white striped skirts from cotton (*see* Manu-
286 factures).[81] The art of weaving is said to have
177 been learned from the Borucas. The Bribri do not know the single-weft technique, however.[82]

291 A man's clothing is generally a pair of trousers and a shirt. A belt can be a piece of vine, string, bark cloth, or brown and white striped cotton woven by the men. Except on
[184] the Pacific side, leather belts are almost never worn. Sandals are unknown, and shoes are rare in the region of Talamanca but are more common on the Pacific slope.

302 **Adornment.** Women's hair is long (figs. 9, *d*; 10, *b–c*) and usually parted in the center, braided, and rolled into a bun. Only at Salitre
[184] and Ujarrás does one see short and curled hair
[301] on the younger women. Flowers, ribbons, cheap barrettes and combs, often as many as six or seven, are favorite adornments for the head (fig. 9, *a–c*). Although men have short hair, there is a tendency to allow it to grow longer than is customary among non-Indians, particularly the forelocks which are combed straight back or hang on the face untouched (fig. 10, *a, d*).

Face painting seems to have been practised on the Caribbean side as late as the eighteen seventies. Gabb calls attention to it in Talamanca[83] and the then Bishop of Costa Rica, Bernardo A. Thiel, mentions some women and children whom he saw in Chirripó and states: " . . . They had two horizontal black bands

[Text continues top of P. 20(B)--analyst]

TRANSPORTATION

481 **By Land.** The most common method of transportation is by foot. The Talamancans are expert walkers on steep, rocky trails, some of which lead through tunnels of matted forest

[Text continues bottom of P. 20(B)--analyst]

[81] Compare this with Gabb, 1875, pp. 517–18.
[82] Stone, 1949, pp. 16–17.
[83] Gabb, 1875, p. 519.

302 (painted) below the eyes and on the cheeks. . . ." [84] In the 20th century, there is no trace [178] of paint in the Caribbean region. On the [177] Pacific side, a few women copy non-Indians by putting *achiote* on their cheeks in place of rouge and using lipstick which they buy. [751] Cocoa butter is applied occasionally as a protection against the sun.

292 In upper Talamanca and upper Chirripó on festive occasions, during short periods of group [476] work in building a house, clearing forests, hauling logs for a clan grave, etc., men still wear [231] headdresses made of white feathers and of macaw and eagle feathers (*see* Reunions).

301 Formerly the *usegLa* (*see* Social Organization) wore necklaces of jaguar teeth. Today, [825] boys use these necklaces "to get them used to hunting and take away fear of the jaguar." Beads made from sea shells are mixed with these teeth (fig. 12, *c*). The long all-shell [178] strings, called *chaquira* and mentioned in Spanish reports,[85] are not known now. Chil- [777] dren have a "good luck" necklace called *sewivu* in Cabécar. This is made from the bark [824] of a tree called *kuri* which is claimed to be immune to disease and to propagate of its own [237] accord. Sea shells, seeds (occasionally carved), bones, and jaguar, monkey, or alligator teeth are strung on it (*see* Manufacture). When financially possible, women wear strands of [439] red beads which are bought in trading posts or commissaries. There are no earrings in the remote sections.

301 On the Pacific side, the "good luck" neck- 184 laces of children have fewer or no teeth and [777] often a Roman Catholic charm or cross is worn. Here women wear earrings and single [439] strands of glass beads bought from traveling merchants.

TRANSPORTATION

481 roots. They are also adept at crossing swift boulder-filled rivers on foot. Their only aid when traveling is a long staff which they cut for this purpose before undertaking a journey.

[84] Fernández, 1883, vol. III, ftn. 10, p. 338.
[85] Fernández, 1882, vol. II, p. 152.

6: Stone E-5 (1956-1959) 1962

SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri
Cabecar

142
291
301
302
[531]

a

b

[854]

c

d

a-b, Bribri women, Pacific slope. *c*, Cabécar women, lower Talamanca. *d*, Cabécar woman carrying baby, Chirripó.

[END PLATE 8]

6: Stone E-5 (1956-1959) 1962

SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri
Cabécar

142
291
302

a

b

[516
301
854]

c

d

a, Bribri man. b, Bribri woman. c, Cabécar woman and girl, Talamanca. Note Boruca mantle on woman. d, Bribri family, Pacific slope.

[END PLATE 9]

6: Stone E-5 (1956-1959) 1962 SA19 Talamanca SA19 Bribri

142
302
291

a

b

142
302
291
854
231

d

c

a, Bribri boy. b, Bribri girl. c, Bribri mother and child, Pacific side. d, Bribri man.

[END PLATE 12]

6: Stone E-5 (1956-1959) 1962 SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri

142
291
301
302

Bribri children from the Pacific slope at the school in Salsen. (Photographs courtesy of Ing. José Fabio Góngora.)

[END PLATE 14]